

Amendments to the Specification:

Page 8, line 11

As with the process for Inbound packets, the search key used to access the desired entry in the session table is based on the IP 5-tuple, but in the processing of Outbound packets, the modified IP 5-tuple that results from the network address translation process is used rather than the IP 5-tuple as received in the packet. Note that in each case, the process results in the use of global parameters to identify the at least one computer system within the local domain. A significant aspect of the method and system herein disclosed comprises a manipulation of the search key either for inbound packets, for outbound packets, or for both, in order to generate a symmetric search key. Generating a symmetric search key requires that the process for generating a Session Table search key for an Inbound packet associated with a session would generate a search key that is identical to one generated by the process for generating a search key for an outbound packet associated with the same session. Thus each session may be represented by a single entry in the session table to manage both directions of flow associated with that session. One embodiment of the subject invention generates the symmetric search key by transposing source and destination parameters for one direction of flow but not the other. Another embodiment of the subject invention generates the symmetric search key by applying an arithmetic manipulation to the source and destination parameters for both directions of flow as described in co-pending US Patent Application Serial No. entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING A SYMMETRIC KEY FOR MORE EFFICIENT SESSION IDENTIFICATION" filed on July 18, 2001 and assigned to the assignee of the present application, thus resulting in identical search keys for both Inbound and Outbound flows.